

Message Text

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ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 ISO-00 COME-00 TRSE-00 CG-00

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 DODE-00 SCI-06 SCEM-02

INT-08 DRC-01 AGR-20 OMB-01 FAA-00 DOTE-00 (ISO) W

----- 121497

R 131150Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3933

INFO USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY ROME

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE TUNIS 6909

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRN, ENRG, TS

SUBJ: PETROLEUM: AVAILABILITY OF SHIP BUNKERS AND
AVIATION FUEL

REF: STATE 234084

1. OFFICIAL OF TUNISIAN NAVIGATION COMPANY (CTN), AGENT
FOR SEVERAL U.S. SHIPPING LINES, INFORMED EMBASSY THAT
THERE HAS BEEN NO SHORTAGE YET OF BUNKER SUPPLIES IN
TUNIS PORTS FOR COMMERCIAL SHIPPING, INCLUDING U.S. FLAG OR
U.S. OWNED VESSELS. ESSO MANAGER SAID THAT ESSO AND
OTHER LOCAL BUNKER SUPPLIERS NO LONGER ABLE FIND AND
IMPORT BUNKER FUEL FOR TUNISIA. THEY HAVE RECEIVED
ALLOCATION FROM GOT/ENI REFINERY, HOWEVER, SUFFICIENT
TO MEET THEIR PRESENT NORMAL NEEDS. THEY ARE CONCERNED
THAT IF WORD GETS OUT THAT BUNKERS AVAILABLE IN TUNISIA
THEY WILL BE DELUGED WITH DEMANDS AND ARE CONSIDERING
INSTITUTING SYSTEM TO SUPPLY PRIORITY NEEDS FIRST,
INCLUDING U. S. OIL COMPANIES DRILLING OFF SFAX AND
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ESTABLISHED CUSTOMERS. GOT INSISTING THAT SHIPS NOW

MAKE SEPARATE PAYMENTS IN FOREIGN EXCHANGE FOR ALL BUNKER PURCHASES IN ORDER ASSURE REVENUE EQUIVALENT TO WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN OBTAINED FROM EXPORT. SHIPPING COMPANIES CLEARLY CONCERNED OVER ADEQUACY OF SUPPLY. PM NOUIRA TOLD ME THAT COMPANIES SHIPPING PL 480 TITLE I VEGETABLE OIL TO TUNISIA INSISTED ON ADVANCE GUARANTY THAT THEY WOULD BE ABLE OBTAIN SUFFICIENT FUEL HERE TO ASSURE CONTINUATION OF JOURNEYS.

2. ESSO MANAGER ALSO SAID THAT ESSO AND PRESUMABLY OTHER SUPPLIERS HAVE BEEN FORCED INSTITUTE 10 PERCENT REDUCTION IN DELIVERIES OF AVIATION FUEL IN DECEMBER AND MAY HAVE TO INSTITUTE FURTHER CUTS NEXT MONTH. ALL SUCH FUEL MUST BE IMPORTED AND SUPPLIES FOR TUNISIA SIMPLY NOT AVAILABLE IN USUAL QUANTITIES. AIR FRANCE CONSIDERING CANCELLATION OF SOME SCHEDULED FLIGHTS, AND ALITALIA AND OTHER COMPANIES MAY BE FORCED TO FOLLOW SUIT. CHARTER AIRCRAFT FOR TOURIST TRADE PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE SINCE MOST HAVE NO PERMANENT REPRESENTATION HERE. GOT CONCERNED ABOUT IMPACT ON TOURISM INDUSTRY WHOSE PERFORMANCE IN 1973 WAS ALREADY DISAPPOINTING. FORTUNATELY, EFFECT ON TOURISM WILL NOT BECOME SERIOUS UNTIL NEXT SPRING/SUMMER SINCE WINTER SEASON RELATIVELY SLACK. WILL BE LITTLE DIRECT IMPACT ON U.S. COMPANIES SINCE, EXCEPT FOR OCCASIONAL CHARTER, NO U.S. AIRLINES PRESENTLY SERVING TUNISIA.
SEELYE

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